

OLC 72-0343

16 MAR 1972

Honorable Les Aspin
House of Representatives
Washington, D. C. 20515

Dear Mr. Aspin:

This is in response to your request during our telephone conversation on 9 March that I put in writing my explanation of our procedures regarding congressional briefings. As I commented at that time, it is my understanding that under Committee policy briefings of the type in question desired by individual members should be obtained through Committee channels or with the Chairman's approval.

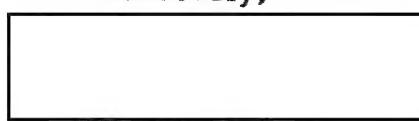
Since our phone conversation I have mentioned your request to Chairman Hebert who recalls that Mr. Helms discussed Soviet naval matters during his last appearance before the Committee (on 8 February). The Chairman suggests that you might want to review the transcript of that testimony which is available to members in accordance with Committee procedures.

In view of the fact that your 7 March letter to Mr. Helms raises certain questions which were not discussed in Mr. Helms' testimony before the Committee, we are preparing some additional material for inclusion in the Committee records which we hope will be responsive to certain of your questions.

I hope that you will find this arrangement satisfactory.

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Sincerely,



John M. Maury
Legislative Counsel

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OLC 72-0342
9 March 1972

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

SUBJECT: Representative Les Aspin's Request for Briefing
on Soviet Naval Matters

1. This morning I called Mr. Aspin in response to his 7 March letter to the Director requesting a briefing on Soviet naval policy (see attached).

2. I told Mr. Aspin that in accordance with rules laid down by the Chairman of the House Armed Services Committee such requests should be funneled through the Committee. He said "what business is it of the Chairman, you mean you don't do anything for individual Congressmen?" I said of course we did brief individual Congressmen but in matters of this kind we did so in response to requests coordinated with the Committee. He said "If I was not on the Committee then the Chairman would not have any jurisdiction." I said the Agency's relations with Congress were still controlled by our Congressional oversight committees. He said "I don't want to know anything about CIA and its operations." I said nevertheless the Chairman had given instructions that briefings be coordinated with the Committee. He said "The Chairman has no right to lay down a rule like that." In closing he asked me for my name which I gave him.

3. About ten minutes later he called back to ask me to put in writing what I had told him. I said I would see what we could do but reminded him the rules were not ours but those of the Chairman. He said "Yes, but you are the one who told me of the policy so I want you to confirm this in writing." I said I didn't know whether I would or not but I would tell the Director of his request.

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JOHN M. MAURY
Legislative Counsel

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